

# The Michigan Legislature

## Lansing, Michigan



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### **GRANHOLM, U.P. DELEGATION RESTORE EMS FUNDING**

*26 Years of Emergency Service Will Continue*

LANSING- Thanks to Governor Jennifer Granholm and members of the U.P. delegation, funding to the Upper Peninsula Emergency Management System (UPEMS) and the Southwest Michigan Systems (SWMS) will continue. The contract needed for them to remain in operation will be renewed. Gov. Granholm and members of the Upper Peninsula Democratic delegation requested that the Department of Community Health (MDCH) reconsider an earlier decision to eliminate the contract and reorganize these services internally.

“Funding for adequately trained first responders is critical to the safety of our residents,” Sen. Mike Prusi (D-Ishpeming) said. “The elimination of this contract would’ve had a significant impact on the coordination and delivery of emergency services in many remote, underserved areas. I would also like to thank Gov. Granholm for her efforts on behalf of Northern Michigan residents.”

The future of the EMS providers was in jeopardy after the recently enacted MDCH Executive Budget included a recommendation to reorganize the Emergency Service Grants and Contracts line item for fiscal year 2006, moving the services in-house. For nearly 26 years, the UPEMS and SWMS have effectively coordinated the education, testing, and training of ambulance personnel and volunteers throughout the state. They also coordinate the inspection of the state’s ambulance fleet.

“We are absolutely delighted that we were able to work along with the Governor to persuade the Department to maintain funding for UPEMS and that UPEMS will be able to continue providing the outstanding service that they are known for throughout the Upper Peninsula” said State Rep. Stephen Adamini (D-Marquette).

Many in the regions served by the UPEMS and the SWMS feel the elimination of the contract would’ve had a significant impact on the coordination and delivery of emergency services in many remote, underserved areas of the state.

“In a region where unpredictable weather and long distances between destinations pose unique challenges to the delivery of quality emergency services, UPEMS is a vital resource,” said State Rep. Rich Brown (D-Bessemer). “I commend the decision to permit UPEMS to continue providing its valuable and exceptionally-run service in the same way it has for 26 years.”

The MDCH had proposed eliminating the contract with UPEMS and SWMS, then hiring six civil service staffers to handle the statewide EMS training and examination duties. This would have more than likely resulted in a service reduction of approximately 50-percent.

“As a former EMT volunteer and Rudyard Ambulance Corps member, I have directly benefited from the training and programs that UPEMS provides,” State Rep. Gary McDowell (D-Rudyard) said. “UPEMS provides an excellent service at a great value for the U.P. and Northern Michigan. I am very pleased that its contract will be re-instated.”

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